

## 4.6

### Cultural Resources

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#### Cultural Resources – The Setting

##### Prehistoric Period

Little is known of the original inhabitants of the Hollister area. Evidence suggests that the Ausayma Indians, who were part of the Costanoan or Ohione linguistic group, had dwelt in the vicinity since 5,000 B.C. They were generally divided among "tribelets" that occupied villages of generally less than 200 people. Their communities likely occupied sites along the Santa Ana Creek east of Hollister and the San Benito River. The combination of resources that could be found in and beside the watercourses prior to Spanish and American settlement made such areas well suited for human habitation: Tule reeds as thatch material for housing; willows for baskets and poles; oaks for acorns; as well as abundant fish and prey species, e.g. geese, antelope, and mule deer. The tribal economy was subsistence-based. Like most other California Indians, the Ausaymas were exclusively hunter-gatherers. Residual artifacts include shell, stone and bone implements, particularly projectile points.

##### Historic Period

Several Spanish expeditions crossed the San Benito Valley in the late 18th century, and a mission was established in 1797 in San Juan Bautista. Historic settlement in the Hollister area began in 1868 when 50 farmers formed the San Justo Homestead Association and purchased 21,000 acres of land from sheep rancher, Colonel William Hollister. They subdivided the land into homesteads and set aside 100 acres for a town site. The association voted to name the future city Hollister after the prior owner of the Rancho San Justo. Settlement proceeded in and around Hollister, particularly in the wake of the extension of a Southern Pacific Railroad line through the community in 1870.

The City incorporated in 1868 and became the seat of government for the newly-formed San Benito County in 1874. Hollister also became the economic hub of the County, surpassing San Juan Bautista in the 1870's in terms of commerce and social activity. Surrounded by fertile, alluvial soils, Hollister primarily derived its importance from its traffic in grains grown in the upper San Benito Valley. Some of the best wheat and hay in the state was raised here, and by 1890 Hollister had become known as "Hay City" for being the primary distribution point for the high volume of hay produced in the vicinity.

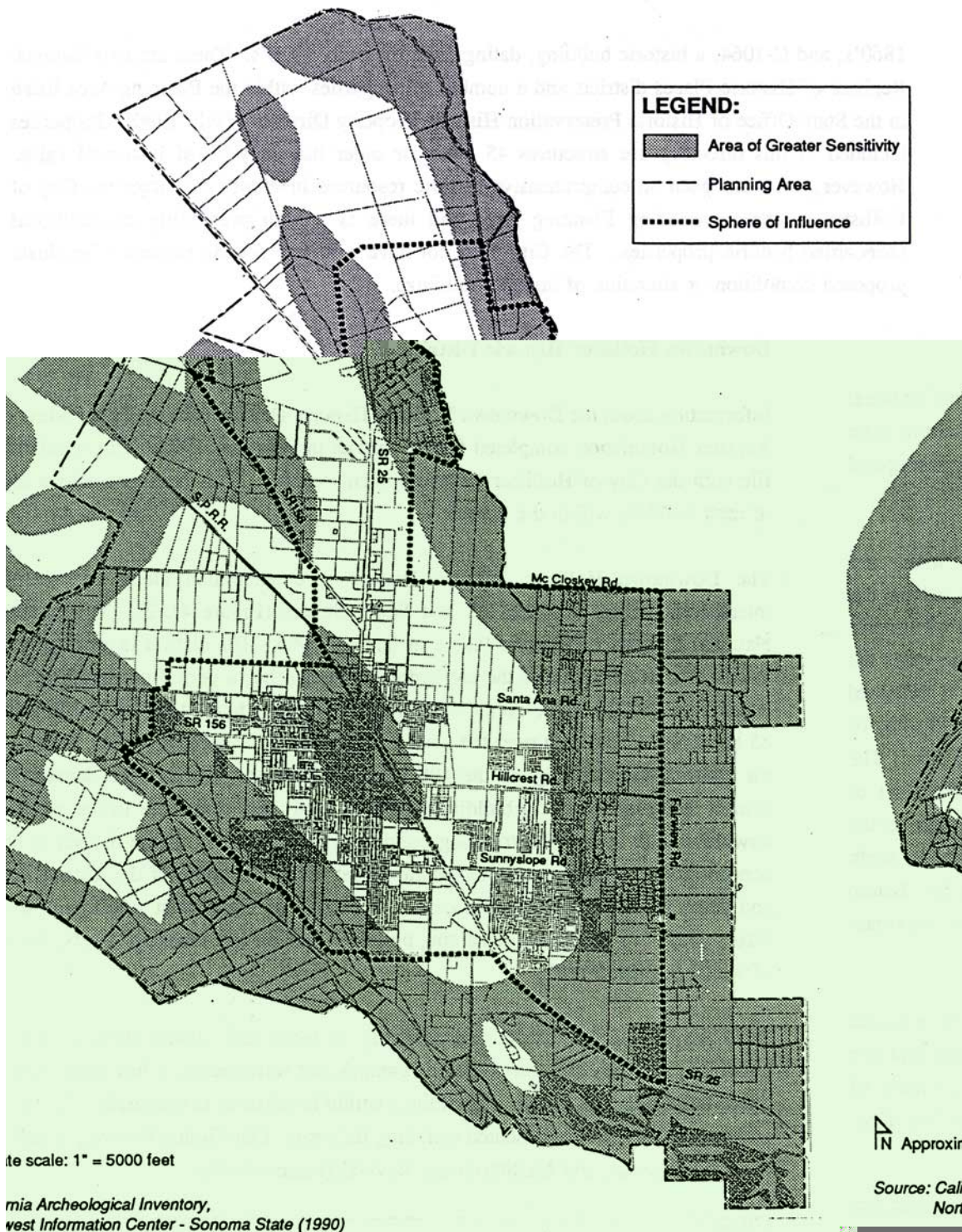
##### Recorded Archaeological Resources

Less than 10% of the Planning Area has been surveyed for the presence of archaeological resources. Nevertheless, the literature reveals that three prehistoric sites have been found in the Hollister Planning Area to date. These have been recorded with the Northwest Information Center of the California Archaeological Inventory' and include: CA-SBN-14, a Native American burial site; CA-SBN-15, a site containing human-modified flakes (usually from carving projectile points); and CA-SBN-181: a site adjacent the Planning Area also containing a flake scatter, suggesting the location of a campsite, and other cultural materials (e.g., core rocks).

These remains are suggestive of one or more village sites in the Planning Area vicinity and point toward the need for project-level archaeological investigations. In 1990 the California

Archaeological Inventory mapped areas of archaeological sensitivity within the Planning Area (Figure 4.6.1). The areas noted in the figure represent the general vicinity in which archaeological resources are likely to exist based on topography and location of natural resources such as water.

Figure 15: Zones of Archaeological Sensitivity



### **Recognized Historic and Architectural Resources**

For a small city, Hollister had developed a substantial downtown by the turn of the century. Unfortunately, many historically significant buildings in downtown Hollister were destroyed in the San Francisco Earthquake of 1906, and more historic structures were damaged in the Loma Prieta Earthquake of 1989. These events, in combination with the suburbanization of Hollister that began in the 1960's, have weakened some of the community's physical links with its past.

Numerous historical properties have been identified in previously prepared project-specific environmental review in Hollister. Two unrecorded cultural resources are also noted in the Planning Area, according to the California Archaeological Inventory: C-805, which represents a historic farm complex, settled in the late 1860's; and C-1064, a historic building, dating from the early 1900's. There are two National Register of Historic Places districts and a number of properties within the Planning Area listed in the State Office of Historic Preservation Historic Property Directory (July 1990). Properties included in this directory are structures 45 years or older that may be of historical value. However, there has been no comprehensive historic resources inventory for either the City of Hollister or the surrounding Planning Area and there is a high probability of additional unrecorded historic properties. The City does not have a formal review process to evaluate proposed demolition or alteration of historic buildings.

### **Downtown Hollister Historic District**

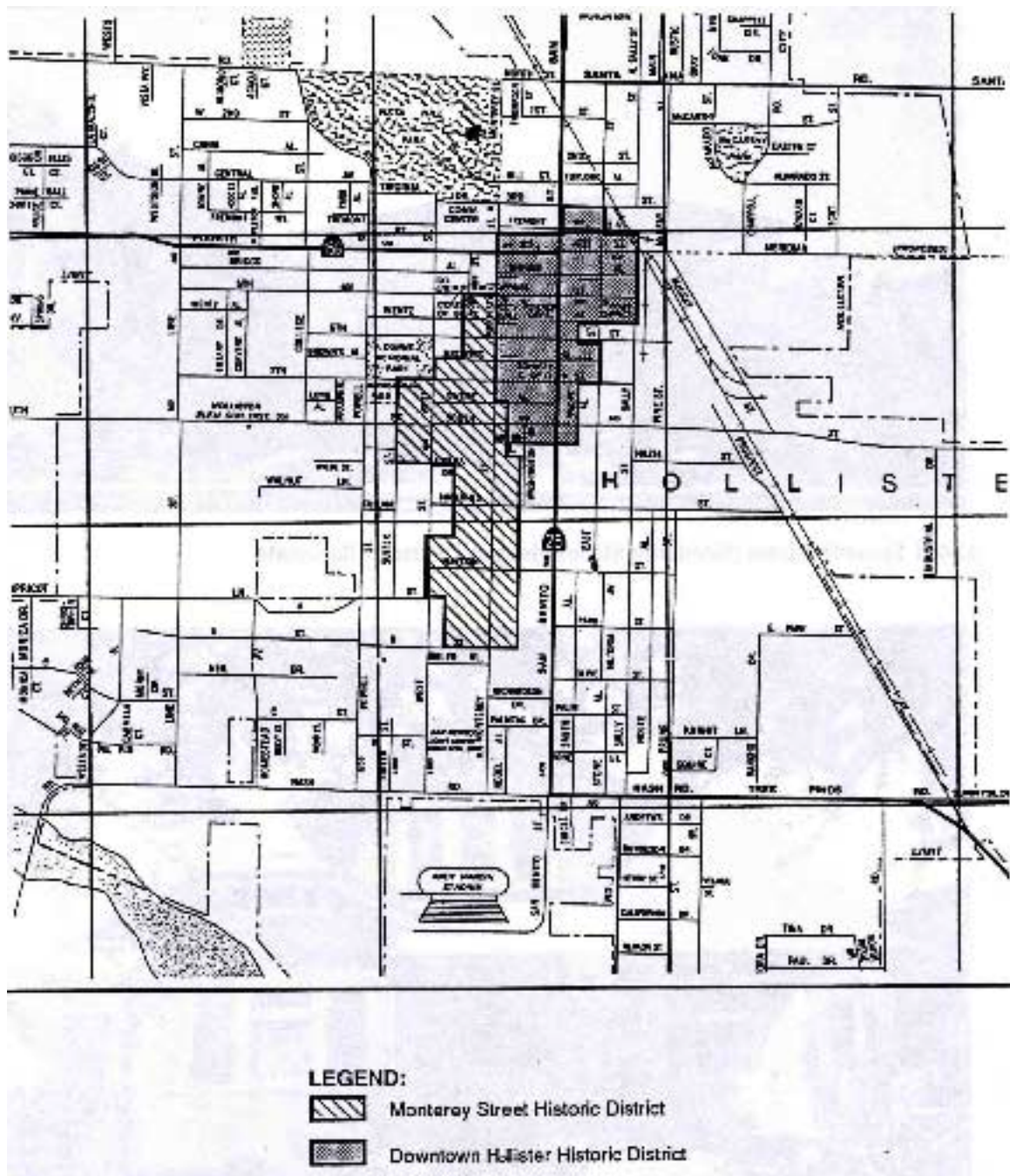
Information about the Downtown Hollister Historic District is based on a review of the National Register Nomination completed for the district in February 1992. This nomination form is on file with the City of Hollister Redevelopment Agency. This form provides a brief description of each building within the district.

The Downtown Hollister Historic District is concentrated along San Benito Street and intersecting streets between 4th and South Streets (Figure 4.6.2). It became listed on the National Register of Historic Places in January 1993. The district is representative of the character of the City's downtown prior to World War II and has a period of significance that spans the years from 1880 to 1942. At the time of district nomination to the National Register it contained 83 buildings constructed over the course of the past 120 years; however, in June 1993 some of the contributing buildings in the 400 block of Monterey Street were damaged by fire. The district is comprised of 54 buildings (65% of total) that contribute to the historic character of downtown and 29 non-contributing buildings. The integrity of the district is high due to the concentration of resources. San Benito Street forms the spine of the district, extending north and south for more than four blocks. About half of the district's buildings front San Benito Street. All but a few of the remaining buildings face on five crossing streets, the most important of which is Fifth Street.

Buildings within the district are primarily in retail use; others include civic and religious buildings, auxiliary structures such as garages and warehouses, a few residential units and one office building. The design of buildings within the district is utilitarian. However, a range of architectural styles is represented including Italianate, Late Gothic Revival, Greek Revival, Neo-Classical Revival, and Mediterranean Revival.



Figure 16: Historic Districts



All of the contributing buildings within the district retain original materials and design elements above the first floor. These include original cornice treatments, ornamentation, and windows. Although only a few of the retail buildings have unaltered storefronts, many of the contributors not in retail use have first stories without substantial alteration.

### **Monterey Street Historic District**

Information about the Monterey Historic District is based on a review of the National Register nomination completed in 1992. This nomination form is on file with the City of Hollister Redevelopment Agency. This form provides a brief description of each building within the district.

The Monterey Street Historic District became listed on the National Register of Historic Places in December 1992. The district reflects the architectural development of Hollister more clearly than any other group of buildings in the city. Monterey Street, an element of Hollister's original street grid, forms the spine of the district. It extends north and south for six blocks and is comprised primarily of single-family residences constructed between 1875 and 1941. The district reflects the state of architectural development in Hollister at the beginning of World War II. In particular, it depicts changes and continuities in residential architecture from the founding of the city to the end of the Great Depression.

The district contains 252 buildings of which 188 (75%) contribute to its historic character. Major contributing structures mark each intersection. The district's integrity is high due to the concentration of resources and the large proportion of contributors, as well as the arrangement of the streets and the placement of buildings on their lots.

Representative architectural styles include Queen Anne, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Craftsman, Prairie and Gable-Front-and-Wing. Many of the houses were not designed to represent an architectural style. Some were purely functional and had no ornament or stylistic pretension. Other buildings reflect style popular at different times during the district's period of significance. Many display very sophisticated designs rendered with care and craftsmanship.

Generally, the buildings within the Monterey Street Historic District have suffered only minor alterations over the years. Typical alterations include additions, porch modifications, re-siding and window replacement. However, many buildings appear virtually unaltered since the time of construction, and many of the rest have alterations that date from the period of significance. Only about half-dozen have lost their architectural integrity in the last 15 years. All of the district's contributing buildings retain important materials and design elements from the close of the period of significance. These include siding, roof shape and sizes, door and window openings and surrounds, porch location, and ornamentation. In almost all cases, the elements are original rather than pre-1942 alterations.

### **Existing Policies and Inventories**

**1995 Hollister General Plan.** The 1995 Hollister General Plan contains a number of policies and implementing actions addressing the cultural resources of the planning area. Policies cover design compatibility of new development, protection of the architectural integrity of nationally recognized landmarks, protection of neighborhoods that have historical or architectural significance, compliance with the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and the standards established by the Secretary of the Interior, and the designation of areas with significant recorded archaeological sites as Open Space or other means to mitigate impacts. The City has in place strong policies to protect archaeological resources when a development is proposed in an area of archaeological sensitivity.

**Hollister Downtown Strategy and Plan.** The Hollister Downtown Strategy and Plan (March 1991) focuses on the revitalization of the historic downtown core of Hollister. The plan identifies a number of architecturally and historically interesting "landmark" buildings that contribute to the unique character of the downtown area. Among the 12 defined strategies of the downtown plan are three with direct bearing on the cultural resources of the city:

- Strategy 3:* Reconstruct Earthquake Damaged Buildings
- Strategy 4:* Redevelop Sites Resulting from Earthquake or Fire
- Strategy 6:* Strengthen and Rehabilitate Landmark Buildings

Also included in the various components of the plan is a set of urban design guidelines. The intent of these guidelines is to assist property owners in their rehabilitation efforts, and to provide direction in the establishment of an appropriate historic "Main Street America" commercial character for downtown Hollister.

**Hollister Community Development Project Area Plan.** The Hollister Community Development Project Area Plan (1983 and amended 2002) is a redevelopment plan that includes downtown Hollister and the surrounding area, as well as a 300-acre area surrounding and including the airport. Among the general goals of the redevelopment plan is the enhancement of the physical environment of the redevelopment area and the emphasis of its favorable characteristics. A copy of the redevelopment plan is on file at the City of Hollister Redevelopment Agency. On-going actions and projects in the redevelopment plan relevant to Hollister's historic resources include redevelopment and revitalization, rehabilitation and seismic retrofitting and commercial strip revitalization. These actions and projects of the Redevelopment Agency reflect the implementation of the major components of the Downtown Strategy and Plan.

## **Cultural Resources – Significance Criteria**

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project will typically have a significant impact on the environment if it would disrupt or adversely affect a prehistoric or historic archaeological site or a property with historic or cultural significance to a community or ethnic or social group; or a paleontological site except as part of a scientific study.

The significance of archaeological resources is determined by criteria found in Appendix K of the CEQA Guidelines. For purposes of the CEQA, an important archaeological resource is one that: (1) is associated with an event or person of recognized significance in California or American history, or recognized scientific importance in prehistory; (2) can provide information that is both of demonstrable public interest and useful in addressing scientifically consequential and reasonable or archaeological research questions; (3) has a special or particular quality such as being the oldest, best example, largest or last surviving example of its kind; (4) is at least 100 years old and possesses substantial stratigraphic integrity; or (5) involves important research questions that historical research has shown can only be answered with archaeological methods.

## **Cultural Resources – Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

### **Impact 4.6-1 Impacts on Archaeological and Prehistoric Resources**

Development consistent with the Draft General Plan has the potential to result in the disturbance of subsurface archaeological and prehistoric resources. However, the Draft General Plan would not change the requirements of the City's existing development review process, strengthens City policies, and contains new programs to protect these resources. This would be a less-than-significant impact.

Development under the Plan could result in damage to archaeological resources that represent a potential contribution to an increasing number of resources lost to development in the region. As growth and development occur, potential disruption of lands containing campsites or burial grounds of prehistoric population could occur. Vandalism is another possible indirect impact of population growth on cultural resources. Vandalism may range from random collection of surface artifacts to active digging by unqualified individuals. Usually such persons, known as “pot hunters,” collect artifacts for display in private collections or for sale, and do so in an unscientific manner. It is for this reason that the City has instituted a policy of retaining specific cultural resource information in confidential files.

The State Public Resources Code, Section 2183.2, requires that sites within an area of potential environmental impact must be evaluated for “uniqueness”, as defined by statute. A resource is “unique” under state law if it: (1) Contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and there is demonstrable public interest in the information; (2) has a special and particular quality such as the oldest of its type and best available of its type; and (3) is directly associated with a scientifically recognized prehistoric or historic person or event. If archaeological remains are found, site work must stop until a qualified expert has evaluated the find. In areas of high archaeological sensitivity, the City requires site inspection before work begins. Only a unique archaeological resource qualifying for special protection is potentially affected by proposed development; non-unique resources need be given no further consideration beyond recording their existence.

Native American campsites and burial sites could be inadvertently excavated or destroyed, especially along creeks; and vandalism could be an indirect impact of increased population. The destruction of archaeological deposits could lead to the loss of important evidence relating to academic and research questions; of cultural and religious resources of native Indians; and of educational resources for the entire community. The critical time for protection of these sites is prior to the construction process.

This potential impact can be mitigated to a level of insignificance through current City procedures that require project-specific studies and implement mitigation as needed when individual projects are considered. The policies and programs as outlined in the Draft General Plan and implemented through an ordinance support this approach.

#### **Mitigation Measures for Impact 4.7-1 Proposed in the Draft General Plan**

- LU1.3 Design Review
- LU1.4 Historical Building Code
- LU1.7 Special Planning Areas
- LU6.1 Infill Development

- LU6.4 Specific Plans
- LU6.5 Transfer of Development Rights
- LU7.1 Site Planning
- LU8.2 Historic Neighborhoods
- NRC 3.1 Development Practices to Conserve Resources

#### **Additional Mitigation Measures Proposed in the EIR**

None required.

#### **Significance After Mitigation**

Implementation of these and other Draft General Plan policies and programs would reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level.

#### **Responsibility and Monitoring**

The City Council would be responsible for adopting the policies and programs that would reduce construction-related impacts, such as those listed in Mitigation Measures, as part of the updated General Plan. The Development Services Department would be responsible for implementing and monitoring those policies and programs.

#### **Impact 4.6-2 Impacts on Historic or Cultural Resources**

Development consistent with the Draft General Plan would not result in the disturbance of historic or cultural resources. City policies would be in-place to assure that that potential impacts are addressed. This would be a less-than-significant impact.

Redevelopment under the General Plan may adversely affect historic resources unless the specific policy recommendations in the plan are carried out. The degree of impact is difficult to quantify as the impact would be incremental as individual buildings were modified. Conversely, specific requirements for historical preservation, such as controls on demolition, renovation, and new construction, could discourage development. From a design character standpoint, certain elements of future development could introduce major changes in scale and character to the existing historic building fabric of the downtown if not properly designed.

#### **Mitigation Measures for Impact 4.7-2 Proposed in the Draft General Plan**

- LU1.3 Design Review
- LU1.4 Historical Building Code
- LU1.7 Special Planning Areas
- LU1.8 Signage
- LU1.9 Cohesive Design Elements
- LU6.1 Infill Development
- LU6.4 Specific Plans
- LU7.1 Site Planning
- LU8.2 Historic Neighborhoods
- LU8.3 Residential Character
- LU8.4 Neighborhood Scale
- LU9.1 Natural Design Elements
- LU10.4 Attractive Street Frontages
- LU11.1 Well-Articulated Buildings



- LU11.2 Unique Design Elements
- LU.A Develop signage ordinance
- LU.F Develop and adopt design review guidelines
- LU.G Develop a street tree program
- LU.H Develop streetscape improvement guidelines
- H2.1 Housing Design Process
- H2.2 Design that Fits into the Neighborhood Context
- H2.3 Housing Design Principles
- H.G Adopt criteria for use in design review and refine the design review process

**Additional Mitigation Measures Proposed in the EIR**

None required.

**Significance After Mitigation**

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## 4.7

### Visual Quality

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#### Visual Quality – The Setting

Hollister lies near the southern end of the broad alluvial plain formed by the San Benito River. Surrounded on three sides by mountainous terrain, it is situated at the focal point of a basin formed by Gabilan Mountains to the south and west, and by the Diablo Range to the east. These mountains provide a rugged, natural backdrop to the highly modified landscape along the plain that is a patchwork of agricultural activity and suburban development. The City has been largely defined by its immediate agricultural surroundings set within a dramatic physical context. In addition to the distant rim of the Coastal mountains, the city is ringed by gentle foothills to the east, south and west. It is also bounded by the San Benito River to the south and west and more marginally by Santa Ana Creek to the north.

The overall visual and physical character of the city has transformed over the past three decades from a predominantly agricultural community composed of a residential core arranged in a traditional tree-lined grid pattern and surrounded by orchards and fields into a largely suburban community of subdivisions and commercial strips that sprawl into farmlands. The dramatic growth of Hollister, particularly in the last decade, appears to have blurred the community's historic visual qualities through a quilt of competing land uses, and building scales and types.

Hollister's transportation corridors are where many people develop their impression of the City. Street trees add to the visual quality of streets and the community as a whole. They also can have a positive effect on energy savings. On summer days, downtown areas of most cities are 3 to 10 degrees warmer than the surrounding region. By shading urban concrete and asphalt, which absorb the sun's rays, trees help lower a city's temperature. In addition, tree shade lowers air conditioning cost 10-15%.

According to Forest Service analysis, trees can add 7-20% to the value of a property. Trees strengthen neighborhoods values in Hollister by giving streets identity and a sense of place. Trees also protect building exteriors from deterioration due to sun exposure. Trees also absorb sound and soften noise, serving as baffles against the noise of busy boulevards and freeways. They can mask urban noise by generating pleasing sounds, like rustling leaves and birdsong.

Hollister's residential neighborhoods are unique areas defined by their street trees, architecture, or, in some areas, a mix of residential and commercial uses. Neighborhoods are the building blocks of Hollister's character, with the most important neighborhoods being in and around the Downtown.

#### Areas of Hollister

**Downtown:** Downtown is already a special area of Hollister. Stretching along San Felipe Road from Santa Ana Road to Hawkins Street, the district has a number of businesses and amenities already, most of which are located in early-twentieth century buildings that reflect the small-town agricultural character and history of Hollister. In addition to being the

urban heart of San Benito County, Downtown is a livable and walkable place where people can gather to enjoy life or conduct business. The Downtown is a focal point because of its taller buildings, landmarks, and its density, history, and scale.

The Downtown residential district contains some of Hollister's most diverse architecture distributed through a neighborhood of historical homes. Located east and south of downtown, the oldest residential districts extend roughly from Fourth Street to Nash Road.

**Westside:** This area is largely composed of scattered vacant lots and relatively small stucco dwellings arranged around a sequence of cul-de-sacs. The State Route 156 corridor bisects the Westside and is the dominant feature of this district. There are few visual cues or points of interest along it, as most of the corridor is composed of abandoned farmland backing up to tract housing that is hidden by fences. The low roof-lines of the housing are dramatically framed by distant ridge-lines to the south, east and west. The terrain's flatness and the one-story height of most of the buildings located in this area afford many distant vistas. There are some middle ground views to the west of the gently rolling Flint Hills which serve as a natural boundary to the northwest.

This area's agricultural heritage is revealed by a couple of islands of remnant orchards. The San Benito River is a dominant boundary feature, although it is primarily visible from State Route 156. The highway's bridge over the river serves as a nondescript western "gateway" to city, since it is flanked by an unsightly wrecking yard on the northwest side of the river and deep gouges to the river banks left by former sand and gravel operations.

**Southwest Hollister:** This section is characterized by a patchwork of large vacant lots adjacent newer single-family subdivisions and townhouses that are arranged around wide streets and cul-de-sacs. Many of the tract homes are partially shielded from the road by fence lines. In addition, the two story houses and eight-foot fences between them tend to obscure distant views from the street. There are no remnant sections of orchards and the relative lack of landscaping gives the neighborhood a somewhat sterile appearance. The entrance to the City along Nash Road, like the western "gateway," tends to be nondescript. The vegetation along the creek is frequently interrupted by ongoing sand and gravel operations. It is also a visually chaotic experience due to the disjointed features alongside the road as one enters the city: willow clusters, large piles of dirt, farm equipment, a row of townhouses, and a stone crushing operation.

**Southside:** Rimmed on the north by Nash Road, on the east by Highway 25, and to the west by Sally Street, the Southside is an exclusively residential area of houses on relatively large lots. The dwellings are generally set back about 20 feet from the street and are uniformly spaced. The newest housing is of neo-traditional western style design: well proportioned with two stories, dormers and front porches. Of all the housing stock, it is among the most attractive and appears to be among the most appropriate to the historic and climatic qualities of the area. Ranch style housing predominates in the older portion of the Southside, while shake roofs and brick chimneys characterize most of the homes. Street landscaping is mature, with many trees 30 to 40 feet high.

**Sunnyslope:** This area has a variety of housing types and densities. Large single-family housing, low density dwellings dot the gently rolling landscape to the east and south, while a mixture of smaller, or more sprawling single family houses, as well as a few multi-family units

occupy the remainder of the area. The Diablo Range, which is more rugged than the Gabilan range, provides a striking backdrop to the east. The elevations in this area are slightly higher than the portions of the City to the west of Highway 25. A tapered swale runs northwest and southeast, (serving as a tributary to Santa Ana Creek,) and providing a distinctive and gentle landscape feature that adds visual variety to the rural residential neighborhood. Most of the vicinity's street trees are short and young and are sparsely planted, particularly in the area north of Sunnyslope Avenue. The housing stock is some of the newest in town, with the exception of the Hillcrest Road corridor, where it is older and more varied.

**Northside:** The lack of any clear or comprehensive environmental design is particularly evident in the Northside. This area has the greatest variety of land uses and is the least visually coherent of the precincts. This is because of industrial and warehouses buildings that appear to be haphazardly developed along Hillcrest Road, McCray Street and Prospect Avenue and for the lack of integration among industrial, agricultural, strip commercial and residential uses. The area, in particular, around the intersection of Hillcrest and Prospect tends to be visually harsh and unattractive due to the concentration of trucks, warehouses and the lack of clear organization in the fabric of the built environment. A commercial corridor extends north along San Felipe Road (State Route 156), with a mixture of building scales and large, distracting signs. The corridor of one-story buildings gives way to more expansive views permitted by the agricultural activity north of McCloskey Road as far as the airport where more commercial and light industrial buildings which partially obscure distant views to the mountains.

### **Visual Quality – Significance Criteria**

As defined by CEQA, a project will have a significant impact on visual quality if it will have a substantial, demonstrable negative aesthetic effect. For purposes of this EIR analysis, the project will be considered to have a significant impact on visual quality if one or more of the following conditions would result from the implementation of the proposed project: (1) A substantial change to the existing visual quality of the region or elimination of visual resources therein; (2) Development that is incompatible in scale with adjoining development; or (3) Obstruction of any scenic vista or view open to the public, or the creation of an aesthetically offensive site open to public view.

### **Visual Quality – Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

#### **Impact 4.7-1 Scenic Resources**

Development consistent with the Draft General Plan could impact scenic vistas and visual natural resources within the Planning Area. However, the development review processes already in place in the City, combined with new policies outlined in the Draft General Plan would limit the impact. This would be a less-than-significant impact.

New development in accordance with the Draft General Plan, if not carefully designed, could result in adverse impacts on existing vistas and the creation of aesthetically offensive sites open to public view. The Draft General Plan contains a number of policies that, if adopted and implemented, would act to reduce the adverse impacts on scenic vistas and



visual natural resources by preserving and ensuring that new development in Hollister has desirable physical scale and design features, particularly in relation to existing development. With careful implementation of the development review and design review processes, as outlined in the Draft General Plan policies listed below, the potential impacts would be less-than-significant.

**Mitigation Measures for Impact 4.7-1 Proposed in the Draft General Plan**

LU1.3	Design Review
LU1.4	Historical Building Code
LU1.5	Underground Utility Lines
LU1.6	City Entrances
LU1.7	Special Planning Areas
LU1.8	Signage
LU1.9	Cohesive Design Elements
LU6.1	Infill Development
LU6.4	Specific Plans
LU6.5	Transfer of Development Rights
LU7.1	Site Planning
LU7.2	Housing Diversity
LU8.2	Historic Neighborhoods
LU8.3	Residential Character
LU8.4	Neighborhood Scale
LU9.1	Natural Design Elements
LU10.4	Attractive Street Frontages
LU11.1	Well-Articulated Buildings
LU11.2	Unique Design Elements
LU.A	Develop signage ordinance
LU.F	Develop and adopt design review guidelines
LU.G	Develop a street tree program
LU.H	Develop streetscape improvement guidelines
H2.1	Housing Design Process
H2.2	Design that Fits into the Neighborhood Context
H2.3	Housing Design Principles
H.G	Adopt criteria for use in design review and refine the design review process

**Additional Mitigation Measures Proposed in the EIR**

None required.

**Significance After Mitigation**

Implementation of these and other Draft General Plan policies and programs would reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level.

**Responsibility and Monitoring**

The City Council would be responsible for adopting the policies and programs that would reduce construction-related impacts, such as those listed in Mitigation Measures, as part of the updated General Plan. The Development Services Department would be responsible for implementing and monitoring those policies and programs.

**Impact 4.7-2 Conflicts with Adjoining Development**

Development consistent with the Draft General Plan could potentially conflict with adjoining development relative to height within the Planning Area. However, the design and development review processes already in place in the City, combined with the new design guidelines outlined in the Draft General Plan would limit the impact of potential conflicts. This would be a less-than-significant impact.

Development consistent with the Draft General Plan would result in buildings and structures which are larger in height, mass and scale than existing adjoining development in some areas of the city. This is of particular concern where development is directly adjacent to existing residential neighborhoods. However, the Draft General Plan contains numerous policies that, if adopted and implemented, would act to reduce the potential height and scale conflicts with adjoining development.

Though careful implementation of the design guidelines and through the use of the design and development review process potential impacts related to conflicting adjoining development would be less-than-significant.

**Mitigation Measures for Impact 4.7-2 Proposed in the Draft General Plan**

LU1.3	Design Review
LU1.4	Historical Building Code
LU1.5	Underground Utility Lines
LU1.6	City Entrances
LU1.7	Special Planning Areas
LU1.8	Signage
LU1.9	Cohesive Design Elements
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**Additional Mitigation Measures Proposed in the EIR**

None required.

**Significance After Mitigation**

Implementation of these and other Draft General Plan policies and programs would reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level.

**Responsibility and Monitoring**

The City Council would be responsible for adopting the policies and programs that would reduce construction-related impacts, such as those listed in Mitigation Measures, as part of the updated General Plan. The Development Services Department would be responsible for implementing and monitoring those policies and programs.

**Impact 4.7-3 Visual Setting and Character of the City**

Development consistent with the updated General Plan could alter or degrade the visual setting or character of the city. However, the design and development review processes already in place in the city, combined with numerous policies in the Draft General Plan, would limit the impact of potential impacts to the visual setting and character of the city to a less-than-significant level.

Implementation of the Draft General Plan would result in increased urban growth, which could alter the visual setting or character of the Planning Area. This additional development could be perceived as a negative aesthetic impact in comparison to its current state. While development consistent with the Draft General Plan would dramatically alter the visual setting of the area as it converts from agricultural use or vacant to development, the plan promotes the preservation, protection, and promotion of the existing aesthetic features of Hollister and to apply them to new development. Views of major landscape features, including the hills, would remain visible.

The build-out of the plan would diminish the rural character and the visual quality of the San Benito Valley area of which the Planning Area is a large part, notably in its southern, western and northern portions where farming operations are most active. Because the Planning Area is largely flat and more than 50% undeveloped, modification of it would be noticeable from major thoroughfares entering the city, such as State Routes 156 and 25. The character of the undeveloped portions of the Planning Area would be altered, replacing the rural open land largely with a suburban landscape that is marked by a thinly distributed residential pattern. In addition, the expansion of many telephone and distribution lines for electricity would introduce generally unattractive vertical elements inconsistent with the rural setting. However, implementation of specific plans and design guidelines, as well as the application of other design policies, would reduce this potential impact to a less-than-significant level.

**Mitigation Measures for Impact 4.7-3 Proposed in the Draft General Plan**

- LU1.3 Design Review
- LU1.4 Historical Building Code
- LU1.5 Underground Utility Lines
- LU1.6 City Entrances
- LU1.7 Special Planning Areas
- LU1.8 Signage
- LU1.9 Cohesive Design Elements
- LU6.1 Infill Development

LU6.4	Specific Plans
LU6.5	Transfer of Development Rights
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H2.1	Housing Design Process
H2.2	Design that Fits into the Neighborhood Context
H2.3	Housing Design Principles
H.G	Adopt criteria for use in design review and refine the design review process

#### **Additional Mitigation Measures Proposed in the EIR**

None

#### **Significance After Mitigation**

Implementation of these and other Draft General Plan policies and programs would reduce any potential impacts to a less-than-significant level.

#### **Responsibility and Monitoring**

The City Council would be responsible for adopting the policies and programs that would reduce construction-related impacts, such as those listed in Mitigation Measures, as part of the updated General Plan. The Development Services Department would be responsible for implementing and monitoring those policies and programs.

#### **Impact 4.7-4 Nighttime Lighting and Glare**

Development consistent with the Draft General Plan could create new sources of light or glare and increase nighttime lighting in the area. This would be a significant impact. Inclusion of a new program, as proposed in this EIR, to address nighttime lighting and glare in new development would reduce this significant impact to a less-than-significant level.

There is a certain amount of development and associated nighttime lighting and glare within the City, and intensification of that development with mid-rise offices, hotels, a cinema and multi-family residential development would increase nighttime lighting on adjoining areas and the potential for increased glare visible from adjacent areas and roadways.

Nighttime lighting and glare associated with existing development in the City can impact nighttime views. Intensification of that existing development with new mid-rise offices, hotels, a cinema, and residential development could increase nighttime light trespass on adjoining areas and has the potential to increase glare visible from adjacent areas and

roadways. Stationary light sources have the potential to adversely affect residences through spillover into adjacent properties. New light sources could also result in a greater overall level of light at night, thus reducing night sky visibility and affecting Fremont Peak Observatory and the general character of the community.

The Draft General Plan contains policies that, if adopted and implemented, would act to reduce the nighttime lighting and glare impacts due to new development. However, this would still be a significant impact.

#### **Mitigation Measures for Impact 4.7-4 Proposed in the Draft General Plan**

LU1.3	Design Review
LU1.6	City Entrances
LU1.7	Special Planning Areas
LU1.8	Signage
LU1.9	Cohesive Design Elements
LU6.5	Transfer of Development Rights
LU7.1	Site Planning
LU8.2	Historic Neighborhoods
LU8.3	Residential Character
LU9.1	Natural Design Elements
LU11.1	Well-Articulated Buildings
LU11.2	Unique Design Elements
LU.A	Develop signage ordinance
LU.F	Develop and adopt design review guidelines
LU.G	Develop a street tree program
LU.H	Develop streetscape improvement guidelines

#### **Additional Mitigation Measures Proposed in the EIR**

##### *Add Implementing Program*

- 4.7-4-1 **Develop guidelines for the preparation of lighting plans.** In order to minimize light trespass and greater overall light levels in the city, new development and projects making significant parking lot improvements or proposing new lighting shall be required to prepare a lighting plan for review by City planning staff. Require a design guidelines to include the following provisions for lighting plans:
- All light sources should be fully shielded from off-site view.
  - All lights to be downcast except where it can be proved to not adversely affect other parcels.
  - Escape of light to the atmosphere should be minimized.
  - Low intensity, indirect light sources should be encouraged, except where other types of lighting is warranted for public safety reasons.
  - On-demand lighting systems should be encouraged.
  - Mercury, metal halide, and similar intense and bright lights should not be permitted except where their need is specifically approved and their source of light is restricted.



**Significance After Mitigation**

Implementation of EIR mitigation and other Draft General Plan policies and programs would reduce any potential impacts to a less-than-significant level.

**Responsibility and Monitoring**

The City Council would be responsible for adopting the policies and programs that would reduce construction-related impacts, such as those listed in Mitigation Measures, as part of the updated General Plan. The Development Services Department and Engineering Department would be responsible for implementing and monitoring those policies and programs.

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## 4.8

### Biological Resources

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#### Biological Resources – The Setting

Existing biological resources conditions are described in the 1995 General Plan EIR and the EIR for the Groundwater Management Plan Update. These sections of those EIRs were reviewed and the information was found to be current as of the issuance of the Notice of Preparation in August 2004. These documents are hereby incorporated by reference, and summarized below.

##### Vegetation

The Hollister planning area is characterized by the broad alluvial plains of the San Benito River and Santa Ana Creek. Prior to European settlement, this area served as extensive riparian wetlands with a probable canopy of coast live oak, black cottonwood, and box elder. These "gallery forests" were bounded by seasonal wetlands that reappeared with each rainy season. Beginning in the early 1800s, the San Benito River Valley began to be altered by grazing and agriculture. Today, most of the area has been highly modified for agricultural and urban uses, although small segments of the San Benito River and Santa Ana Creek still support native plant and animal communities.

Domestication of the landscape has dramatically reduced the diversity of the plant communities that were originally present. A variety of crop and introduced plants and weedy species now characterize much of the non-urbanized portions of the planning area. Four plant communities were identified during site visits which biologically characterize the undeveloped portions of this area; agricultural fields, orchards, irrigation ditches, non-native grasslands, and Central Coast Willow Riparian Forest. These communities and special status plants are discussed below.

**Agricultural Fields:** Irrigated row crops constitute a majority of the planning area. These farmed fields are chiefly comprised of monocultures of alfalfa, wheat, oats, garlic, tomatoes and sugar beets. Given the favorable conditions created by irrigating and plowing, weedy species often grow in the gaps between the rows and along property lines. Typically these include: pigweed (*Amaranthus retrofractus*), field knotweed (*Polygonum aviculare*), bull mallow (*Malva nicaeensis*), cheeseweed (*M. parviflora*), field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*), rabbitfoot grass (*Polypogon monspeliensis*), and Farmer's foxtail (*Hordeum leporinum*).

**Orchards:** Orchards make up about 10% of the planning area. The orchards are composed of english walnut, cherry and apricot. Weedy species like those noted above are commonly found between the rows of trees.

Another minor habitat that is physically part of the agricultural fields, as well as orchards, is the plant community associated with irrigation ditches. Drainage ditches around the planning area support a variety of water-loving, herbaceous vegetation. This would include common cattail (*Typha latifolia*), nail rod (*T. angustifolia*), baltic rush (*Juncus balticus*), alkali bulrush (*Scirpus robustus*), and tall umbrella plant (*Cyperus eragrostis*). The upper banks of these areas often support less hydric, holophytic species such as salt grass

(*Distichlis spicata*), alkali heath (*Frankenia grandifolia*), and fat hen (*Atriplex patula* var. *hastata*).

**Non-Native Grasslands:** This habitat, used for grazing cattle is generally located on the western and eastern borders of the planning area although it often tends to be associated with the areas devoted to agricultural fields. It is comprised of weedy upland species such as ripgut grass (*Brodiaea diandra*), Mediterranean barley (*Hordeum leporinum*), soft chess (*Bromus moenchii*) and wild oats (*Avena fatua*). The species composition in these areas has been maintained by regular grazing.

**Central Coast Arroyo Willow Riparian Forest:** Remnants of a once significantly more extensive riparian forest exists along several reaches of the San Benito River and Santa Ana Creek. Perhaps as much as 95% of the riparian zone along the San Benito River has been disturbed by agricultural activities and more extensively by sand and gravel operations. Existing riparian vegetation is dominated by stands of arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*) and red willow (*Salix bonplandiana*) with a scattering of black cottonwood (*Populus trichocarpa*). Trees are widely spaced and rarely form a continuous canopy. Mulefat and sandbar willow are also present as secondary cover plants. According to California Natural Diversity Database, this plant community has a high priority for protection.

**Seasonal Wetlands:** There are a few seasonal wetlands or freshwater marshes that are evident in the planning area during the rainy season (November to April). These types of wetlands are generally considered to be areas that are periodically inundated by surface and/or groundwater and which support vegetation adapted to survival in saturated soils. These features are located on the east side of the planning area, both to the north and south of John Smith Road. They should be distinguished from the seasonal ponding that can occur in some agricultural fields, as these flooded fields generally do not support the plant species adapted to saturated soils. Vegetation characteristic of these wetlands includes small stands of common cattail (*Typha latifolia*), nail rod (*T. angustifolia*), alkali bulrush (*Scirpus robustus*), and baltic rush (*Juncus balticus*).

The California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) have jurisdiction over any modifications of wetlands. Jurisdiction of the Corps is determined by provisions of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, which prohibits the discharge of dredged or fill material into "waters of the United States" without a permit, in the form of an individual or a "nationwide" permit, and by Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1889, that prohibits unauthorized discharge into navigable waters. Jurisdictional authority of the CDFG over wetland areas is established by Fish and Game Code Sections 1601 - 1606, which address activities that would disrupt the natural flow or alter the channel, bed, or bank of any lake, stream or river. This code prohibits the substantial change of any of these features without notification of the CDFG, obtaining a Streambed Alteration Agreement, and incorporating needed mitigations. The wetlands resources policy of the CDFG states that the Fish and Game Commission strongly discourages development in or conversion of wetlands, unless at a minimum, project mitigation assures that there will be no net loss of either wetland habitat values or acreage.

**Special Status Plant Species:** The California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) maintains a continuously updated list of rare, threatened, or endangered plants and animals that is referred to as the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB). No special status plants

are listed with the CNDDDB as currently appearing within the planning area for the Draft General Plan. However, Pinnacles Buckwheat (*Eriogonwn nortonhl*) has been observed in nearby foothills in the Gabilan Range, 8-9 miles south and west of Hollister. However, it is not be expected to occur in the planning area because potential habitat for this species does exist in Hollister.

### **Wildlife**

The undeveloped portions of the planning area support a variety of wildlife, especially bird species. Permanent, migrant or seasonally resident avian species are found throughout the planning area, although the majority are more frequently observed along watercourses, particularly the San Benito River and Santa Ana Creek. Many of the riparian species forage in adjacent crop and grasslands. In addition, grazing and agricultural land provides significant foraging range for predatory bird and mammal species that reside in the Gabilan Mountains to the west.

**Agricultural Fields:** While farmlands tend to have the smallest number of wildlife species, those evident tend to be present in large numbers. Large flocks of birds including Killdeer, Common Crow, Mourning Dove, Brewer's Blackbird, and House Finch can be found foraging in the fields. Violet Green Swallows were observed foraging over fields associated with aquatic habitat and bridge nesting sites. These species are replaced by dabbling ducks and wading birds for most portions of the planning areas that flood seasonally in the fall and winter.

Eight species of predatory birds have been observed or would be expected in various habitats throughout the planning area for the project, and many would likely use croplands for hunting. Peregrine Falcon, Norther Harrier, Turkey Vulture, Northern Harrier, American Kestrel and Red-tailed Hawk would be expected. In addition, croplands are probably used by nocturnal predatory species such as the Long-eared Owl, Great Horned Owl and Barn Owl.

**Non-native Grasslands:** Many species that are characteristic of the agricultural fields are also present in the grasslands grazing area of the east and west sides of the planning area. In addition, there are Golden Eagle, Killdeer, Western Kingbird, Barn Owl, Black Phoebe, Lesser Goldfinches and Western Meadowlarks. California ground squirrel, brush rabbit, vole, Botta's pocket gopher, western fence lizard, and gopher snake have also been observed in grassland areas. Several concentrated nesting areas for the Burrowing Owl have been observed near the eastern edge of the area, just south of Mansfield Road and east of Fairview Road. This species is generally associated with ground squirrel dens, which they use for roosting and nesting.

**Seasonal Wetlands:** A series of small marshes occur below a water tower near the eastern edge of the area, north of the intersection of Fairview and John Smith Roads. These wetlands are used by several species of marsh and water birds. These include the Red-winged Blackbird, Brewer's Blackbird, Black Phoebe, Western Kingbird, Western Sandpipers, Killdeers, Snowy Egret, Greater Yellowlegs, Mallards and Cinnamon Teal. Tadpoles and recently transformed Western Spadefoot Toads were observed during investigations conducted as part of the 1995 General Plan EIR at the seasonal pond on the south side of John Smith Road.



**Central Coast Arroyo Willow Riparian Forest:** This habitat, while fragmented, has the greatest variety of observable species and is anticipated to have a large number more that were not observed during the reconnaissance visits. Almost all of the species noted in the grass and cropland areas also utilize riparian areas of the San Benito River and Santa Ana Creek. Riparian habitat is used by a range of birds during the fall and spring migrations along with wintering residents. The presence of surface water, dense vegetative cover, and moist soil not only supports a diversity of bird species, but also other vertebrates such as amphibians, reptiles and mammals. Among the species known in this area beyond those noted within the other habitats are the Ash-throated Flycatcher, Western Flycatcher, Yellow Warbler and the Warbling Vireo.

**Aquatic Habitat:** The aquatic habitat value of the San Benito River is relatively low due to the drawing down of the water table from agricultural operations, the removal of riparian vegetation over the past century (and the coinciding increase in water temperatures), grading, and related disturbances to the stream channel from gravel operations, grazing and orchard/farming encroachments. While the river is generally perennial, except during extended droughts, some reaches are dry during the summer and early fall. Native fish associations are limited to roach, minnow and sucker. No Steelhead trout spawning areas are present within the river system. Amphibian species like the Western Spadefoot Toad have been observed in their tadpole phase in the river's deeper pools.

**Special Status Wildlife Species:** According to the Endangered Species Act of 1973, it is against the law to "take" (i.e. to hunt, harass, or harm) any species listed as threatened or endangered. Development within any area which has threatened or endangered species that are regarded as "Special Status" is regulated by both the Federal Fish and Wildlife Service and the DFG. CEQA Guidelines, section 15380, defines rare and endangered species and the evaluation of levels of impacts. The following Special Status species have been observed in or are believed to be present in the planning area:

San Joaquin Kit Fox. The San Joaquin Kit Fox (*Vulpes macrotis mutica*) has been found within two miles of the east side of the planning area. The species was once widely distributed throughout the native grasslands that formerly occupied the low rolling hills rimming the San Joaquin, Salinas, Santa Clara and San Benito Valleys. Agricultural operations and more recently, urban development, have eliminated or fragmented their habitat, resulting in a 50% diminution of their population.

Kit foxes living in the hills to the east may occasionally forage in the planning area, as suggested by incidental observations by local residents and the proximity of recently confirmed sightings one and a half miles to the east of the southeastern edge of the planning area.

Tricolored Blackbird. The tricolored blackbird is a colonial-nesting species, restricted in distribution primarily to California. The species is locally distributed during the breeding season, occurring at ponds, lakes, or marshes with dense growths of tules or cattails. Populations are more widespread during the non-breeding season, when large flocks often take advantage of food available in agricultural fields, landfills, and grasslands. This species is threatened by loss and alteration of breeding habitat. Nesting colonies are generally isolated from human disturbances. This species is known to have nested on Sargent Creek in Santa Clara

County, 1.5 miles north of its confluence with San Benito River, about 9 miles northwest of the Hollister Planning Area.

Golden Eagle. A few Golden Eagles, (*Aquila chrysaetos*) have been observed within the eastern portion of the planning area, although no nesting sites, typically occurring in mature live oaks, were observed. Foraging within the outer edge of the planning area would be expected, but nesting or roosting would be unlikely because of the intensively managed nature of much of the land associated with agriculture.

Burrowing Owl. As noted above, a concentrated nesting site of the Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*) has been recorded. These consist of clusters of small dens in grasslands of the rolling hills in the eastern part of the planning area east of Fairview Road.

Northern Harrier. The Northern Harrier is a State Species of Special Concern. It utilizes grassland, ruderal, and marsh habitats as a migrant and winter visitor. This species is threatened by destruction of marsh habitats, the spread of urban and agricultural development, and grazing of livestock on grassland habitats.

Yellow Warbler. The Yellow Warbler are known to occur in the riparian corridors in the Rancho San Benito area, about 7.5 miles northwest of Hollister. They are most numerous where large willows, cottonwoods, and sycamores occur with a dense undergrowth present. Where appropriate habitat is present, this species would be expected along the San Benito River and Santa Ana Creek.

Bank Swallow. The Bank Swallow is locally common near seep riverbanks and gravel pits. It nests in colonies, burrowing into banks. Populations are diminishing as a result of flood control projects that eliminate nesting habitat.

Southwestern Pond Turtle. The Southwestern Pond Turtle is found in permanent freshwater ponds, lakes, marshes, and rivers. This species is found at many locations in central California. It would be expected in permanent aquatic habitat, for example, within portions of the San Benito River, within the project area.

California Tiger Salamander. The California Tiger Salamander is found in grassland and woodland habitats in underground refuge during most of the year. This species uses seasonal wetlands, ponds, ditches, streams, and sometimes reservoirs for breeding. Suitable habitat may be present at ponds located near the intersection of Fairview Road and John Smith Road in the eastern portion of the planning area, and within ponds that form within the San Benito River flood plain as a result of gravel mining operations.

Red-Legged Frog. The Red-Legged Frog frequents permanent freshwater ponds, marshes, and slow-moving streams, preferring sites with extensive emergent vegetation of other dense cover along the water's edge. This species is not known from the project area, but would be likely where appropriate conditions exist, for example, within ponds that form within the San Benito River flood plain as a result of gravel mining operations. This frog species was historically much more widely distributed throughout the state of California. Populations have been extirpated

from many areas as a result of habitat modification, competition with the introduced bullfrog, predation by the introduced Green Sunfish, water pollution, and other factors.

Western Spadefoot Toad. The Western Spadefoot Toad (*Scaphiopus hainmondi*) is a nocturnally active toad generally found associated with open treeless grassland or mixed woodland and grassland where temporary pools form or where there are sandy, gravelly washes or temporary streams. Over most of the year they live in burrows that they dig with their hind feet. They depend upon heavy rainfall for breeding, which may occur between mid-February and August.

### **Biological Resources – Significance Criteria**

The biological resources analysis uses criteria from the State CEQA Guidelines. The Initial Study determined that the proposed project would have potentially significant biological resources impacts. Based on the findings of the Initial Study the project would have a significant biological resources impact if it would:

- Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.
- Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native nursery sites.

### **Biological Resources – Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

#### **Impact 4.8-1 Special-Status Plant and Animal Species**

New development under the Draft General Plan could affect a number of federal or state listed plant and animal species directly through incidental take or indirectly through habitat destruction unless the policies and programs in the Draft General Plan are followed. This would be a potentially significant impact that can be reduced to a less-than-significant level with the new General Plan.

There are a number of state and federally listed threatened and endangered species known to occur on or in the vicinity of the Planning Area. Protocol level surveys were not conducted

in the Planning Area during the Draft General Plan process. The California Natural Diversity Database, assembled and updated by the California Department of Fish and Game, and other relevant resources which cite local occurrences were relied upon in compiling a species account search within the Planning Area.

Compliance with state and federal wetlands protection regulations would also minimize impacts to these species. Both state and federal laws would require prior authorization from the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) and/or the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for any project that would result in a “take” of a state or federally listed species. Proposed development within wetland areas would also be required to adhere to the setback requirements associated with any Section 404 Clean Water Act permits, administered by the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Section 401 Water Quality Certification, administered by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and/or Section 1603 California Fish and Game Streambed Alteration Agreements, administered by the CDFG. If any development work would occur within the wetlands or associated setbacks, additional mitigation in the form of habitat creation/restoration could be required by these permits.

Within the project area, habitat for Special Status species is limited primarily to wetlands and riparian habitats. Development of sites within the proposed planning area would not be expected to have significant adverse impacts on the threatened Pinnacles Buckwheat, as there is no potential habitat for this species within the planning area. However, a number of other species have the potential to be impacted as a result of development in the planning area.

A number of other special-status species (such as various raptor and songbird species) which do not have the same protection as federally or state listed wetlands species occur, or potentially occur, in portions of the Planning Area. The undeveloped parcels that are characterized as grasslands, agriculture, and oak savanna/woodlands that are contiguous with existing developed areas would be the areas with the highest potential of supporting any of these species. Development in these areas would therefore have the greatest potential to impact special-status species.

While implementation of the listed Draft General Plan policies and programs, in addition to compliance with state and federal wetlands protection regulations would minimize impacts to wetland species and their habitats, development consistent with the Draft General Plan would increase the intensity of development directly adjacent to a few of these habitats, which may potentially impact these species. The General Plan would require that vacant sites are surveyed for the presence or absence of relevant special status species prior to development approval, and would require that where impacts to special status species are deemed unavoidable, potential impacts to the identified species are minimized through design, construction, and operation of the project. Compensation measures could include on-site set asides or off-site acquisitions (e.g. conservation easements, deed restrictions, etc.) that would be required if project impacts result in direct loss or indirect impacts that cannot be mitigated in other ways. This might also involve species-specific enhancement restoration efforts for the mitigation lands.

#### **Mitigation Measures for Impact 4.8-1 Proposed in the Draft General Plan**

##### **LU3.5 Open Space Preservation**

LU6.1	Infill Development
LU6.3	Orderly Growth
LU6.4	Specific Plans
LU6.5	Transfer of Development Rights
LU7.1	Site Planning
OS1.1	Open Space Preservation
OS1.2	Cluster Development
OS1.3	Site Planning to Preserve Open Space
OS1.4	Open Space Management
OS1.5	Open Space Use
OS1.6	Utilities in Open Space
OS1.7	Coordination with Other Jurisdictions
OS.B	Develop open space management plan(s)
OS.E	Coordinate with other jurisdictions in open space planning
OS.F	Manage private open space
OS.G	Provide open space access points
OS.H	Create open space preservation opportunities
OS.I	Restrict utilities in open space
NRC 1.1	Protection of Environmental Resources
NRC 1.2	Protection of Endangered Species Habitat
NRC 1.3	Compensatory Habitat, Habitat Enhancement or Habitat Protection
NRC 1.4	Other Habitat Planning Measures
NRC 1.5	Wetlands Preservation
NRC 1.6	Enhancement of Creeks and Drainageways
NRC 1.7	Specialized Surveys for Special Status Species
NRC.U	Require pre-construction surveys for nesting raptors
NRC.V	Require project mitigation for habitat
NRC.W	Require project review for energy conservation measures
NRC.X	Require wetlands delineation
NRC.Y	Require wetlands replacement plans

**Additional Mitigation Measures Proposed in the EIR**

None.

**Significance After Mitigation**

The Draft General Plan outlines a number of policies and actions that would be required in order to minimize potential impacts to the various federally and state listed plant and animals species that are known to occur on or in the Planning Area. If these measures are implemented, impacts to special-status species would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

**Responsibility and Monitoring**

The City Council would be responsible for adopting the above amended policies as part of the updated General Plan to ensure special status species are not harmed. Implementation of on- or off-site acquisitions or restoration as required by many of these implementation measures would be the responsibility of the individual applicant who would be impacting the special-status species. Overall implementation and enforcement of these programs would be dependent on the development plans of the individual project and its impacts. Project applicants would be responsible to hire a qualified biologist to guide them in their efforts.

The Development Services Department would be responsible for implementing and monitoring those policies and programs.

**Impact 4.8-2 Sensitive Natural Communities**

A number of sensitive natural communities could be affected by development under the Draft General Plan either directly in undeveloped areas designated for development or indirectly by intensifying the land use adjacent to current undeveloped lands. Policies and programs in the Draft General Plan call for the protection and avoidance of sensitive habitat. While this could be a potentially significant impact, it would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with the new General Plan.

There are a number of state and federally listed threatened and endangered species known to occur on or in the vicinity of the Planning Area. Protocol level surveys were not conducted in the Planning Area during the Draft General Plan process. The California Natural Diversity Database, assembled and updated by the California Department of Fish and Game, and other relevant resources which cite local occurrences were relied upon in compiling a species account search within the Planning Area.

Development under the Draft General Plan could result in the removal of some remaining riparian areas, in particular along Santa Ana Creek and on the San Bemto River in the northwest corner of the planning area. These areas are used by over 90% of the bird and wildlife species expected or observed around Hollister, including special status species like the Tricolored blackbird, Golden eagle, Yellow warbler, the Bank swallow, the Red-legged frog and the Western spadefoot toad. These areas have already been diminished by about 95% of their original extent, primarily as result of agricultural and gravel mining operations. As what remains represent isolated plant/animal communities for existing wildlife species, further diminution would represent a critical loss of this important habitat.

In order to reduce impacts to sensitive habitat proposed development the Draft General Plan proposed that new development should either avoid, minimize, or compensate for loss of habitat. Avoidance would be the preferred measure where feasible. If it is deemed that an impact is unavoidable, minimization of direct and indirect impacts or compensation through habitat restoration, creation, or enhancement would be required under the Draft General Plan. If these measures are implemented, impacts to habitat would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

**Mitigation Measures for Impact 4.8-2 Proposed in the Draft General Plan**

- LU3.5 Open Space Preservation
- LU6.1 Infill Development
- LU6.3 Orderly Growth
- LU6.4 Specific Plans
- LU6.5 Transfer of Development Rights
- LU7.1 Site Planning
- OS1.1 Open Space Preservation
- OS1.2 Cluster Development
- OS1.3 Site Planning to Preserve Open Space
- OS1.4 Open Space Management

OS1.5	Open Space Use
OS1.6	Utilities in Open Space
OS1.7	Coordination with Other Jurisdictions
OS.B	Develop open space management plan(s)
OS.E	Coordinate with other jurisdictions in open space planning
OS.F	Manage private open space
OS.H	Create open space preservation opportunities
OS.I	Restrict utilities in open space
NRC 1.1	Protection of Environmental Resources
NRC 1.2	Protection of Endangered Species Habitat
NRC 1.3	Compensatory Habitat, Habitat Enhancement or Habitat Protection
NRC 1.4	Other Habitat Planning Measures
NRC 1.5	Wetlands Preservation
NRC 1.6	Enhancement of Creeks and Drainageways
NRC 1.7	Specialized Surveys for Special Status Species
NRC.U	Require pre-construction surveys for nesting raptors
NRC.V	Require project mitigation for habitat
NRC.X	Require wetlands delineation
NRC.Y	Require wetlands replacement plans

#### **Additional Mitigation Measures Proposed in the EIR**

None.

#### **Significance After Mitigation**

The Draft General Plan outlines a number of policies and actions that would be required in order to minimize potential impacts sensitive natural communities in the Planning Area. If these measures are implemented, impacts to habitat would be reduced to a less-than significant level..

#### **Responsibility and Monitoring**

The City Council would be responsible for adopting the above amended policies as part of the updated General Plan. Implementation of on-or off-site acquisitions or restoration as required by many of these implementation measures would be the responsibility of the individual applicant who would be impacting the special-status species. Overall implementation and enforcement of these programs would be dependent on the development plans of the individual project and its impacts. Project applicants would be responsible to hire a qualified biologist to guide them in their efforts. The Development Services Department would be responsible for implementing and monitoring those policies and programs.

#### **Impact 4.8-3 Loss of Wetlands**

Implementation of the Draft General Plan could affect a number of wetlands including marshes, streams, and various other wetlands that support a number of important plant and animal species. With implementation of the policies and programs in the Draft General Plan this would be a less-than-significant impact.

Seasonal wetlands, such as the wetland ponds on the north and south sides of John Smith Road, could be adversely impacted by Draft General Plan. These areas are used by many of



the same species of the birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians as the riparian habitats including special status species like the Tricolored Blackbird and the Western Spadefoot Toad. It is not possible to predict the precise amount of wetland habitats that might be impacted by future development allowed under the Draft General Plan. An extensive wetland delineation of all Planning Area lands was not conducted for the development of the Draft General Plan or this EIR.

The Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) would require that any fill of jurisdictional waters be in compliance with permit requirements under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and further interpreted in a variety of regulatory guidance letters issued by the Corps. The noted wetlands will necessitate a delineation of jurisdictional waters to be verified by the Corps. A definitive assessment of this impact would thus be made when specific projects are proposed.

As with all wetland habitat adjacent to development, should redevelopment or infill be proposed along this habitat, certain measures would be required to reduce potential impacts to wetland habitats. If construction were to be proposed adjacent to any wetland habitat, a delineation (verified by the Corps) may be required to ensure that wetland habitats are avoided to the maximum extent practicable. Compliance with Draft General Plan programs and policies, along with state and federal laws, would provide protection for the wetlands that would potentially be impacted as a result of development consistent with the Draft General Plan. Therefore, this would be a less-than-significant impact.

#### **Mitigation Measures for Impact 4.8-3 Proposed in the Draft General Plan**

- NRC 1.1 Protection of Environmental Resources
- NRC 1.2 Protection of Endangered Species Habitat
- NRC 1.3 Compensatory Habitat, Habitat Enhancement or Habitat Protection
- NRC 1.4 Other Habitat Planning Measures
- NRC 1.5 Wetlands Preservation
- NRC 1.6 Enhancement of Creeks and Drainageways
- NRC 1.7 Specialized Surveys for Special Status Species
- NRC.X Require wetlands delineation
- NRC.Y Require wetlands replacement plans

#### **Additional Mitigation Measures Proposed in the EIR**

None required.

#### **Significance After Mitigation**

In addition to implementation of Draft General Plan policies and programs, compliance with state and federal wetlands protection regulations would also minimize impacts. If the above measures are implemented, impacts would not be considered substantially adverse, and would thereby be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

#### **Responsibility and Monitoring**

The City Council would be responsible for adopting the above amended policies as part of the updated General Plan. Implementation of on- or off-site acquisitions or restoration as required by many of these implementation measures would be the responsibility of the individual applicant who would be impacting the special-status species. Overall implementation and enforcement of these programs would be dependent on the development plans of the individual project and its impacts. Project applicants would be

responsible to hire a qualified biologist to guide them in their efforts. The Development Services Department would be responsible for implementing and monitoring those policies and programs.

#### **Impact 4.8-4 Habitat for Native Wildlife**

Development on vacant parcels would occur at a higher intensity use of the land use and development under the Draft General Plan may result in a loss of habitat for native wildlife if development occurs on currently available wildlife habitat. In the Planning Area, those areas that are proposed for development that provide habitat for wildlife occur primarily around the perimeter of or are contiguous with the areas that are currently developed. With implementation of the policies and programs in the Draft General Plan this would be a less-than-significant impact.

While no detailed study of animal movements has been conducted for the Planning Area, knowledge of the area, its habitats, and the ecology of the species on and in the vicinity of the site permits sufficient predictions about the types of movements occurring in the region. While the Planning Area supports some significant areas of natural habitats, development within the Planning Area would only slightly reduce the amount of regional habitat available for native wildlife, including the special-status species known to occur regionally.

The Draft General Plan may be accompanied by increased groundwater pumping which would result in further reduction of flows in the San Benito River. Stream flows have declined in the river considerably over the past forty years, transforming it from a perennial (year-round) stream to an intermittent or annual stream. Spring and summer flows could be further diminished if groundwater recharge is reduced by coverage of large parts of the planning area with pavement and other impervious surfaces. A number of water conservation measures are proposed in the Draft General Plan and as part of the City's participation in the San Benito County Water Resources Association.

Due to the fact that development of habitats for native wildlife is limited under the Draft General Plan and areas that could be developed would be required to follow the programs and policies of the Draft General Plan, future development would result in a less-than-significant impact to habitat for native wildlife.

#### **Mitigation Measures for Impact 4.8-3 Proposed in the Draft General Plan**

- LU3.5 Open Space Preservation
- LU6.1 Infill Development
- LU6.3 Orderly Growth
- LU6.4 Specific Plans
- LU6.5 Transfer of Development Rights
- LU7.1 Site Planning
- OS1.1 Open Space Preservation
- OS1.2 Cluster Development
- OS1.3 Site Planning to Preserve Open Space
- OS1.4 Open Space Management
- OS1.5 Open Space Use
- OS1.6 Utilities in Open Space

OS1.7	Coordination with Other Jurisdictions
OS.B	Develop open space management plan(s)
OS.E	Coordinate with other jurisdictions in open space planning
OS.F	Manage private open space
OS.H	Create open space preservation opportunities
OS.I	Restrict utilities in open space
NRC 1.1	Protection of Environmental Resources
NRC 1.2	Protection of Endangered Species Habitat
NRC 1.3	Compensatory Habitat, Habitat Enhancement or Habitat Protection
NRC 1.4	Other Habitat Planning Measures
NRC 1.5	Wetlands Preservation
NRC 1.6	Enhancement of Creeks and Drainageways
NRC 1.7	Specialized Surveys for Special Status Species
NRC.U	Require pre-construction surveys for nesting raptors
NRC.V	Require project mitigation for habitat
NRC.X	Require wetlands delineation
NRC.Y	Require wetlands replacement plans

**Additional Mitigation Measures Proposed in the EIR**

None required.

**Significance After Mitigation**

If the above measures are implemented, impacts would not be considered substantially adverse, and would thereby be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

**Responsibility and Monitoring**

The City Council would be responsible for adopting the above amended policies as part of the updated General Plan. Implementation of on- or off-site acquisitions or restoration as required by many of these implementation measures would be the responsibility of the individual applicant who would be impacting the special-status species. Overall implementation and enforcement of these programs would be dependent on the development plans of the individual project and its impacts. Project applicants would be responsible to hire a qualified biologist to guide them in their efforts. The Development Services Department would be responsible for implementing and monitoring those policies and programs.

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## 4.9

### Geology and Seismicity

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#### Geology and Seismicity – The Setting

This section contains a description of potential impacts resulting from the geology, soils and seismicity of the Hollister Planning Area. The proposed General Plan includes policies that are intended to minimize potential effects of these impacts. However, the intent of the General Plan is not to remove all risk associated with each specific geologic/seismic hazard, but to reduce risk to life and property and to allow informed decisions about land use development near these hazards.

Hollister and environs are in a seismically active area. Four fault zones traverse the county in the vicinity of the planning area: the San Andreas Fault, the Quien Sabe Fault, the Tres Pinos and the Calaveras Faults. The San Andreas Fault system, probably the largest in the United States, crosses San Benito County in a southeasterly direction along the Gavilan Range two and a half miles west of the City. It is capable of generating an earthquake of up to 8.3 magnitude on the Richter scale. The Hayward/Calaveras Fault runs south and north and bisects the City through downtown. It has the capacity for a quake of 7+ on the Richter scale, and creeps 1 cm/year. The Quien Sabe Fault, three miles to the east of the planning area and trending southeast, registered an earthquake of at least 5.5 on the Richter scale in 1986. The Tres Pinos Fault is a minor fault that is connected to the Calaveras Fault in Hollister's Downtown. It passes in a southeasterly direction through the planning area. All but the Tres Pinos Fault are considered active faults.

Table 4.9.A shows the Modified Mercalli Scale, which is used also used to define potential earthquake hazards. Hazards associated with earthquake faults include ground rupture, ground shaking and liquefaction. The Hollister area has been historically susceptible to all three earthquake hazards. Ground rupture is the primary hazard and is regarded as more likely to occur in the zone immediately around the fault, while ground shaking, or vibrations caused by an earthquake, is a secondary seismic hazard that can occur many miles from the fault. The more lightly compacted and/or water-saturated the soil conditions the more capable the ground is of transmitting seismic waves. Consequently, the intensity of ground shaking or liquefaction is related more to soil conditions than to the distance from a given fault. Liquefaction is generated by the sudden rise of the water table through loose soils. That is, it generally occurs during prolonged periods of ground shaking to alluvial (flood plain), or granular soils, if the water table is within 30 feet of the surface. These conditions are expected to exist in Hollister because of its alluvial soils and perched water table, particularly within the flood plain around the San Benito River.

Table 4.9.A: Modified Mercalli Scale

<b>Average Peak Velocity (cm/s)</b>	<b>Intensity Value and Description</b>	<b>Average Peak Acceleration (g =9.80 m/s)</b>
	<b>I.</b> Not felt except by a very few under especially favorable circumstances.	
	<b>II.</b> Felt only by a few persons at rest, especially on upper floors of buildings. Delicately suspended objects may swing.	
	<b>III.</b> Felt quite noticeably indoors, especially on upper floors of buildings, but many people do not recognize it as an earthquake. Standing automobiles may rock slightly. Vibrations like passing of truck. Duration estimated.	
1-2	<b>IV.</b> During the day felt indoors by many, outdoors by few. At night some awakened. Dishes, windows, doors disturbed; walls make creaking sound. Sensation like heavy truck striking building. Standing automobiles rocked noticeably.	0.015g-0.02g
2-5	<b>V.</b> Felt by nearly everyone, many awakened. Some dishes, windows, and so on broken; cracked plaster in a few places; unstable objects overturned. Disturbances of trees, poles, and other tall objects sometimes noticed. Pendulum clocks may stop.	0.03g-0.04g
5-8	<b>VI.</b> Felt by all, many frightened and run outdoors. Some heavy furniture moved; a few instances of fallen plaster and damaged chimneys. Damage slight.	0.06g-0.07g
8-12	<b>VII.</b> Everybody runs outdoors. Damage negligible in buildings of good design and construction; slight to moderate in well-built ordinary structures; considerable in poorly built or badly designed structures; some chimneys broken. Noticed by persons driving cars.	0.10g-0.15g
20-30	<b>VIII.</b> Damage slight in specially designed structures; considerable in ordinary substantial buildings with partial collapse; great in poorly built structures. Panel walls thrown out of frame structures. Fall of chimneys, factory stack, columns, monuments, and walls. Heavy furniture overturned. Sand and mud ejected in small amounts. Changes in well water. Persons driving cars disturbed.	0.25g-0.30g
45-55	<b>IX.</b> Damage considerable in specially designed structures; well-designed frame structures thrown out of plumb; great in substantial buildings, with partial collapse. Buildings shifted off foundations. Ground cracked conspicuously. Underground pipes broken.	0.50g-0.55g
More than 60	<b>X.</b> Some well-built wooden structures destroyed; most masonry and frame structures destroyed with foundations; ground badly cracked. Rails bent. Landslides considerable from riverbanks and steep slopes. Shifted sand and mud. Water splashed, slopped over banks.	More than 0.60g
	<b>XI.</b> Few, if any, (masonry) structures remain standing. Bridges destroyed. Broad fissures in ground. Underground pipelines completely out of service. Earth slumps and land slips in soft ground. Rails bent greatly.	
	<b>XII.</b> Damage total. Waves seen on ground surface. Lines of sight and level distorted. Objects thrown into the air.	

An earthquake on April 8, 1961, marred almost half of the city buildings, and the Loma Prieta Earthquake of October 17, 1989, destroyed nine commercial structures in the downtown and severely damaged 65 dwellings in the surrounding residential areas. There is insufficient evidence to link structural damage with liquefaction triggered by an earthquake, nor is there sufficient subsurface information to evaluate this potential hazard.

A substantial portion of central and south east Hollister lie within the Alquist-Priolo Special Study Zones for the Hayward/Calaveras and Tres Pinos Faults. These study zones were established by the State legislature and mapped by the Division of Mines and Geology in order to restrict development within areas of high seismic risk. Institutional uses such as schools and hospitals are precluded from development within the Special Study Zones, while geological fault investigations must be performed by a state registered geologist for any other development within them. (The investigations are designed to clearly determine the location of fault lines and to recommend building setbacks from any mapped fault traces.)

Geological and soil investigations are required by the State Subdivision Map Act for all proposed subdivisions within the study area. Landslides are not an environmental concern in the planning area. It is possible that in the event of a severe earthquake on the Calaveras Fault a landslide could be triggered on the west side of Park Hill, but there are no slide deposits there at present.

### **Geology, Soils and Seismicity – Significance Criteria**

Under CEQA, exposure of people or structures to major geologic hazards is considered a significant adverse impact. For the purpose of this DEIR, significant geologic hazards would pertain to soil and/or seismic conditions so unfavorable that they could not be overcome by reasonable design, construction, and maintenance practices. In addition, exposing an increased number of people to risk of injury would constitute a significant impact.

### **Geology, Soils and Seismicity – Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

#### **Impact 4.9-1 Seismic Ground Shaking**

Seismic hazards in the Hollister Planning Area will expose people and structures to potential, substantial adverse seismic effects, including the potential risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking. A similar potential for seismically-induced damage affects most areas located near major active faults within California. The Draft General (Health and Safety) contains numerous policies and programs to reduce these potential impacts to what is defined as an “acceptable level of risk,” as determined by the City, even if the impacts of the Draft General Plan should be considered significant and unavoidable.

The planning area is bisected by the Hayward/Calaveras Fault and is only two and one half miles east of the main trace of the San Andreas rift zone. In addition, there are at least two known active faults within a 10-mile radius which could generate earthquakes of magnitude 5.5 or greater. Much of the downtown is located within the Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zone. The state mandates that site-specific geotechnical studies be conducted within such zones to investigate the possibility and potential effects of fault rupture so that they can be avoided, as well as to provide special land use designations.

In the event of a major earthquake on the Hayward/Calaveras or San Andreas Fault or within the San Francisco Bay Area, ground motion in the planning area would be severe.

Because of this active seismic environment surrounding the planning area, it is extremely likely that Hollister would be subjected to a large magnitude quake.

It is reasonable to expect that the project area would be subject to intense ground shaking during an earthquake. The potential for damage during strong seismic shaking cannot be eliminated. Ground shaking can result in structural failure and collapse or cause nonstructural building elements to fall, presenting a hazard to occupants and damage to contents. The Draft General Plan contains many policies and standards in the Health and Safety Element, which, if adopted and implemented, would reduce the potential impacts associated with strong seismic ground shaking.

The intensity of the seismically-induced ground shaking would be a direct result of the distance from the epicenter, and the magnitude of the quake. Swaying of the existing and proposed buildings is likely to occur in this event. Structural damage would be caused by soil liquefaction during an earthquake (see discussion under impact 4.10-4). This is a significant unavoidable impact.

#### **Mitigation Measures for Impact 4.9-1 Proposed in the Draft General Plan**

HS1.1	Location of Future Development
HS1.2	Safety Considerations in Development Review
HS1.3	Coordination with San Benito County and Other Agencies on Safety Matters
HS1.4	Seismic Hazards
HS1.5	Geotechnical and Geologic Review
HS1.6	Engineering Tests for Geologic Conditions
HS1.7	Design of Safe Structures and Utilities
HS2.1	High Occupancy Structures
HS2.2	Emergency Services Facilities
HS2.3	Hazard Awareness
HS2.4	Access for Emergency Vehicles
HS2.5	Neighborhood Disaster Preparedness
HS2.6	Disaster Preparedness Training and Planning
HS.E	Provide public information on safety and emergency preparedness issues
HS.G	Update geologic, flooding and other hazard maps
HS.L	Continue to implement actions related to unreinforced masonry buildings
HS.M	Designate emergency evacuation routes
HS.Q	Regularly update the Building Code
HS.S	Review and update the City's Emergency Plan

#### **Additional Mitigation Measures Proposed in the EIR**

None.

#### **Significance After Mitigation**

Implementation of Draft General Plan policies and programs would reduce impacts but this would still be a significant unavoidable impact.

#### **Responsibility and Monitoring**

The City Council would be responsible for adopting the policies and programs that would reduce construction-related impacts, such as those listed in Mitigation Measures, as part of the updated General Plan. The Development Services Department and Public Works



Department (Engineering) would be responsible for implementing and monitoring those policies and programs.

**Impact 4.9-2 Seismic Related Ground Failure**

Seismic hazards in the Hollister Planning Area will expose people and structures to potential substantial adverse seismic effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death from seismic-related ground failures of liquefaction, lateral spreading, lurching, differential settlement, and flow failures. The Draft General (Health and Safety) contains numerous policies and programs to reduce these potential impacts to what is defined as an “acceptable level of risk,” as determined by the City, even if the impacts of the Draft General Plan should be considered significant and unavoidable.

In the event of a large earthquake, the Planning Area could locally experience some or all of the above-listed ground failures. Such failures can cause damage to structures, breaking of underground utilities, embankment failures, differential settlement of structures, the cracking of paved areas and the rising toward the ground surface of buoyant buried facilities, such as empty or partially empty storage tanks. The Health and Safety Element of the Draft General Plan contains many policies that would reduce the potential impacts associated with seismic-related ground failure for public and private development that occurs. Development under the Draft General Plan would still expose people and property to additional risk from seismic ground failure.

**Mitigation Measures for Impact 4.9-2 Proposed in the Draft General Plan**

- HS1.1 Location of Future Development
- HS1.2 Safety Considerations in Development Review
- HS1.3 Coordination with San Benito County and Other Agencies on Safety Matters
- HS1.4 Seismic Hazards
- HS1.5 Geotechnical and Geologic Review
- HS1.6 Engineering Tests for Geologic Conditions
- HS1.7 Design of Safe Structures and Utilities
- HS2.1 High Occupancy Structures
- HS2.2 Emergency Services Facilities
- HS2.3 Hazard Awareness
- HS2.4 Access for Emergency Vehicles
- HS2.5 Neighborhood Disaster Preparedness
- HS2.6 Disaster Preparedness Training and Planning
- HS.E Provide public information on safety and emergency preparedness issues
- HS.G Update geologic, flooding and other hazard maps
- HS.L Continue to implement actions related to unreinforced masonry buildings
- HS.M Designate emergency evacuation routes
- HS.Q Regularly update the Building Code
- HS.S Review and update the City's Emergency Plan

**Additional Mitigation Measures Proposed in the EIR**

None.

**Significance After Mitigation**

Implementation of these and other Draft General Plan policies and programs would reduce impacts but this would still be a significant unavoidable impact.

**Responsibility and Monitoring**

The City Council would be responsible for adopting the policies and programs that would reduce construction-related impacts, such as those listed in Mitigation Measures, as part of the updated General Plan. The Development Services Department and Public Works Department (Engineering) would be responsible for implementing and monitoring those policies and programs.

**Impact 4.9-3 Expansive Soils**

Geotechnical review required under City regulations and the Draft General Plan would prevent exposure of property improvements to potential adverse effects from expansive soils. This would be a less-than-significant impact.

The soils in the northern portion of the planning area are clays that have high to very high shrink-swell potential. These soils can expand and contract in response to changes in soil moisture conditions. The sub-grade beneath pavement edges would be subject to seasonal moisture fluctuations, which could damage them. Soil expansion could result in problems such as cracked foundations and pavement areas. Thus, local soil properties could affect the integrity of foundations, roadways, and utility lines.

The impacts from the expansive soils in parts of the planning area may be eliminated when specific development projects are proposed by conducting engineering tests to determine the proper design criteria. Building foundation footings, utility lines, roadways, and sidewalks can be designed in areas of clayey soils to accept the estimated degree of soil contraction, expansion, and settlement potential determined from on-site soils testing, according to standards provided by the Uniform Building Code. The soil property impacts would be reduced to a level of insignificance under the policies and programs contained in the Draft General Plan and when project-specific mitigation measures are implemented.

**Mitigation Measures for Impact 4.9-3 Proposed in the Draft General Plan**

- HS1.1 Location of Future Development
- HS1.5 Geotechnical and Geologic Review
- HS1.6 Engineering Tests for Geologic Conditions
- HS1.7 Design of Safe Structures and Utilities
- HS.G Update geologic, flooding and other hazard maps
- HS.Q Regularly update the Building Code

**Additional Mitigation Measures Proposed in the EIR**

None required.

**Significance After Mitigation**

Implementation of City regulations and Draft General Plan policies and programs would reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level.

**Responsibility and Monitoring**

The City Council would be responsible for adopting the policies and programs as part of the updated General Plan. The Development Services and Public Works Departments (Engineering) would be responsible for implementing and monitoring those policies and programs.

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